



# Cross-County Commuting


Most workers in Utah must travel some distance each day to get to work. From 2007 to 2011, there were an annual average of 1,234,094 workers at least 16 years old in Utah. About 59,417 of the employed, or 4.8 percent, worked from home. The remaining 95.2 percent (1,174,677) commuted to work, with almost 80 percent traveling by vehicle and driving alone.

The U.S. Census Bureau gathers these labor force and commuting statistics through the American Community Survey (ACS). All household members 16 years or older are asked if they worked during the week before. If they did, they are asked for the address of their work site and how long it took to get there in minutes. Travel times include walking, biking, riding public transit, carpooling or driving alone. In Utah, those who do not work at home have an average one-way commute of 21.4 minutes. Figure 1 shows average travel time to work by county.

By comparing home addresses to work addresses, the Census Bureau determines how many commuters travel large distances to get to work. The most common measurement is the number of resident workers that

travel outside their own county. Figure 2 ranks Utah's counties based on the percentage of workers who leave their county to work.

Most Utah commuters work among the major cities along the Wasatch Front. Utah's four largest urban counties — Salt Lake, Utah, Davis and Weber — had 75.4 percent of the population and 79.4 percent of the nonfarm payroll jobs in 2011. Cross-county commuting among the large metro counties and all adjacent counties is extensive. Salt Lake County receives the largest inflows of workers as the seat of state government, with many business headquarters and the international airport.

As Utah's population has continued to grow most heavily in and around the Wasatch Front in recent decades, commuting times and distances have continued to increase, whether by car, bus, light rail or heavy rail. 

**Commuting times continue to increase, regardless of the choice of travel.**

Figure 1: Average Travel Time to Work  
in Minutes, 2007–2011

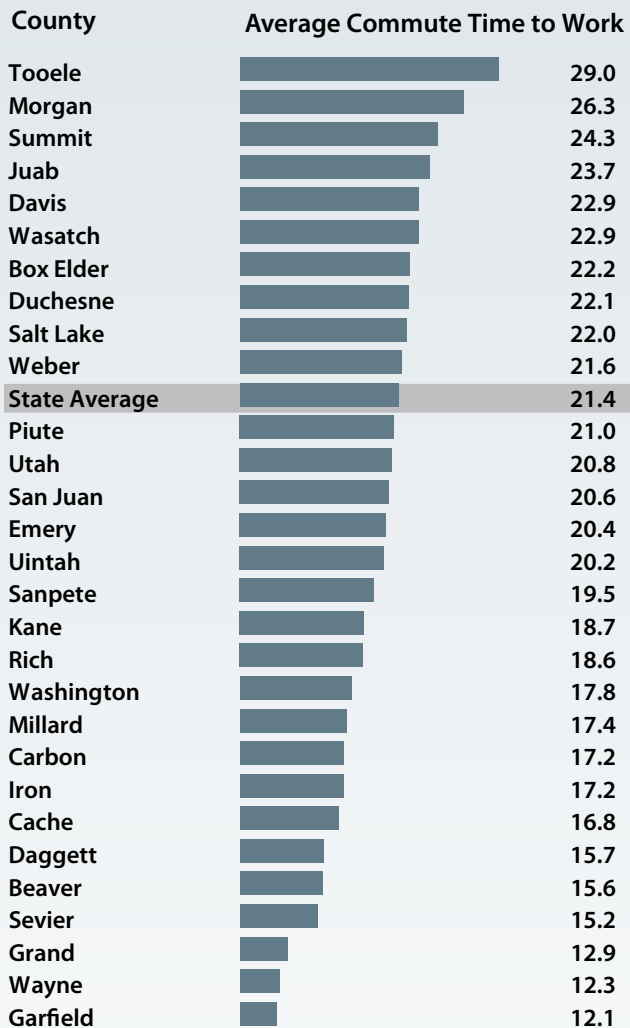
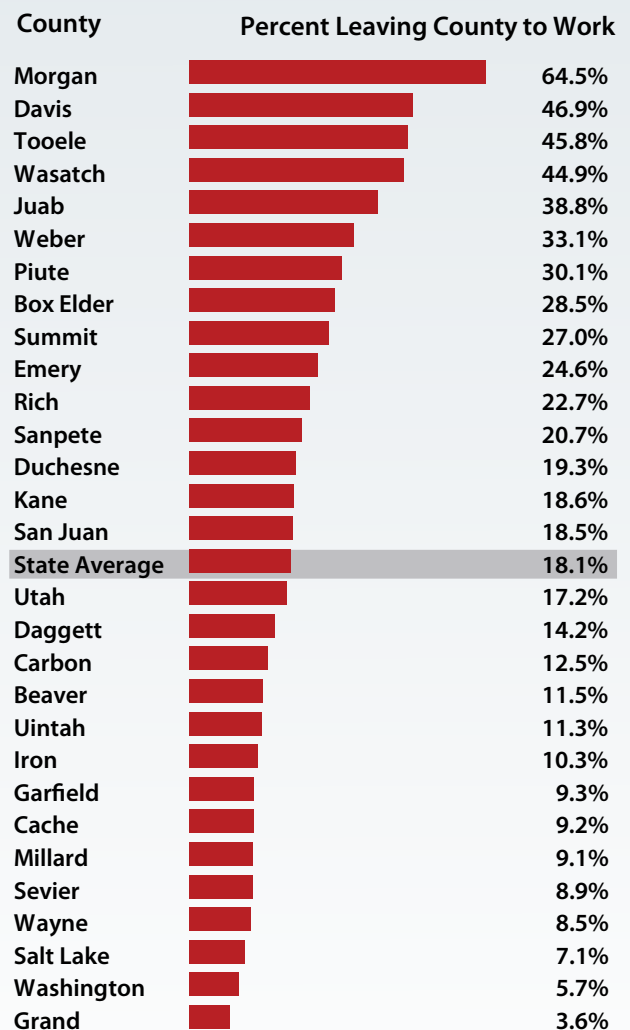


Figure 2: Share of Resident Workers Leaving  
the County to Work, 2007–2011



A cross section of the Utah population was surveyed regarding their mode of travel, and the time it took to get to their work site.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2007–2011 5-year estimates